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E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/21/2018
TAGS: [AA](#) [IS](#) [KS](#) [LI](#) [NZ](#) [PHUM](#) [SZ](#)
SUBJECT: NEW ZEALAND DOES NOT SUPPORT ISRAELI MEMBERSHIP IN
JUSCANZ GROUP

REF: STATE 16185

Classified By: Embassy Wellington DCM David J. Keegan. Reasons: 1.4 (b)
and (d).

¶1. (C) DCM David Keegan presented reftel demarche February 21 to Carolyn Forsyth, Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) responsible for international organization issues. After DCM reviewed U.S. concerns and our assessment of the importance of Israel into full membership and participation the JUSCANZ group, Forsyth responded that New Zealand's position has not changed since Foreign Minister Peters was demarched by the U.S., Australia, and Canada in May 2006. New Zealand does not support Israel's membership, but it recognizes the importance of this issue to the United States, and it will therefore not stand in the way of a genuine consensus in favor of Israel's membership. However, it does not conclude that such a genuine consensus exists.

¶2. (C) New Zealand supports Israel's participation in WEOG for electoral purposes, Forsyth said. It does not consider this to be a precedent for Israel's participation in other WEOG groups. JUSCANZ in particular, she noted, is a "like-minded" group in New Zealand's view. It is not a group simply for information sharing. New Zealand does not consider Israel to be "like-minded" on the issues of human rights given its treatment of Palestinians. Forsyth hastened to add that New Zealand recognizes there are faults on the Palestinian side, "but that is not the issue here."

¶3. (C) Before considering Israel's membership in JUSCANZ, New Zealand is seeking and believes other JUSCANZ members are seeking a discussion of the criteria for membership and the purpose of the group. In such a discussion, she indicated that New Zealand would argue that JUSCANZ is a group of "like-minded" members for the purpose of policy coordination, and it would raise the human rights concerns which lead New Zealand to find Israel not to be "like-minded."

¶4. (C) DCM emphasized the importance we attach to Israel's participation in JUSCANZ and our judgment that Israel is as qualified for such membership and participation as the current members of the group. Forsyth said simply that New Zealand does not accept that view. If a full discussion leads to a consensus in favor of Israel's membership, New Zealand "would give way if it is the last one standing" in deference to the U.S. interest.

KEEGAN